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INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

United States Department of Agriculture

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JANUARY 5, 1938 (WEDNESDAY)

WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture

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DRY BEANS AND PEAS PLENTIFUL

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

A year of bumper crops--that's the way that food shoppers will probably remember 1937. For last year there were apples, grapes, pears, celery, potatoes, and a number of other foods in superabundance. Even now that 1937 is chronologically as dead as the year one comes news of two more record crops--dry beans and peas.

Since these two crops are harvested late in the year they will be sold throughout most of 1938. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics reports that the crop of dry beans last year was over one tenth larger than any other bean crop on record.

As a result of this large supply bean prices already are considerably lower than a year ago and somewhat below average. Beans are always an inexpensive food source, however, because they are so concentrated. Two other virtues of the humble bean--they're easy to store and not hard to grow.

In addition to this, dry beans are a source of vitamins B and G. They are rich in iron, an excellent source of phosphorus, and a good source of calcium. They are high in carbohydrates and fairly high in protein. Dry peas have similar food value. Green dry peas are a good source of vitamin A.

The protein in beans and peas can not, however, be relied upon as the only

source of protein in the diet. Like the protein in all other legumes except soybeans, it is not "complete" and must be supplemented by the better-quality protein in such foods as milk, eggs, meat, and fish. These are important points and especially to be remembered by persons who are trying to keep diets at a low cost.

There is another phase of bean knowledge with which some shoppers are not so familiar--that's an understanding of bean varieties. To most of us dry beans mean navy beans, kidney beans, or maybe dry limas.

But there are scores of other varieties. There are the mottled brown Pintos, the yellow eyes, the pinks, and the red Mexicans. There are the Great Northerns, California whites, and the wine-speckled cranberry beans.

For all these and other varieties of dry beans and for dry peas the United States Department of Agriculture has set up standards for grading. These standards have been used largely in the sale of beans by growers, shippers, and wholesale dealers. Retailers may not emphasize the quality of beans in terms of U.S. Grades, but a look at the standards will help homemakers shop for beans.

For instance when a government official grades beans he notes whether or not they have a good natural color, whether split and damaged or discolored beans are present; or whether they contain stones and dirt.

Thorough washing and soaking are necessary preliminaries to any kind of bean cookery. Pick them over carefully, wash them many times in cold water, and soak overnight. If possible cook the beans in soft water. Hard water contains certain mineral salts that make the beans hard.

Some housewives add baking soda to hard water to soften beans and shorten cooking time. But the use of soda reduces the vitamin content of the vegetable and detracts from the color and the flavor.

Beans may be served in soups, stews, as a basis for a vegetable loaf, in

croquettes, baked, or in a number of other special dishes. For most of these it is necessary to simmer the beans for at least part of the cooking time.

Beans may be cooked either in the water in which they are soaked or in fresh water. If water is discarded, with it goes some of the food value. But on the other hand many persons consider the flavor of legumes too strong if they are cooked in water in which they have been soaked.

For "boiled" beans, simmer slowly until they are tender. Watch them carefully to see that they don't go "dry" and burn. They need a lot of water to absorb as they return to something like their natural stage before they dried. Pieces of salt pork or bacon or a ham hock cooked with beans add flavor.

Tastes differ in even such a simple dish as bean soup. Some persons like the beans whole. Others like them mashed in the soup. Others like them sieved to get rid of the bean skins. In any case after the soup stands for a time there is a tendency for the beans to separate from the liquid.

To prevent this, when the beans are ready to serve add enough flour and water to bind the mixture together but not enough to make the soup thick. To keep the flour from cooking too quickly and forming lumps, mix the flour and water and then gradually add a small portion of the hot bean mixture to this. Pour this into the bean soup, cook a few minutes, and serve.

Add a slice of lemon to each bowl of soup. Or if you wish, sprinkle small pieces of crisp bacon over it. Salt meat, pickles, or tomato sauce are other accompaniments for bean dishes to offer good contrast in flavor.

Lima beans are especially good served in tomato sauce. Kidney beans are attractive scalloped or served in bean salads. Red kidney, small red, pink, and Pinto beans are favorites with those who make Mexican or Spanish dishes such as chile con carne. Dried peas, whole, or yellow and green split ones are used

mostly in soups.

There are several methods of baking beans. Some are simmered until they are tender, then browned in the oven. Others are only partially cooked before they go into the oven to bake slowly in a bean pot until they are tender. Seasonings also differ considerably.

The quicker way to bake beans is to simmer the beans first with a piece of salt pork, mustard, salt, and other seasonings. When the beans are tender put them in a shallow pan with enough of the liquid to moisten them. Season to taste with molasses or brown sugar. Slice the salt pork and lay it over the top. Brown in the oven.

Probably the most famous bean dish of all is Boston baked beans. Good Boston baked beans are a result of long cooking in a slow oven, usually in an earthenware bean pot. As the beans get tender they gradually absorb the richness of the salt pork, and the flavor of the molasses, mustard and any other seasoning. The bean pot contributes by holding in the heat.

Following is a recipe for Boston Baked Beans that comes from a New England cook:

Boston Baked Beans

2 cups dry beans	1 teaspoon mustard, if desired
1/2 pound salt pork	1-1/2 teaspoons salt (depending on
4 tablespoons molasses	saltiness of pork)

Soak the beans overnight in cold water to cover. In the morning drain, add a quart of fresh water, simmer for 45 minutes, or until the beans begin to soften, and drain. Score the rind of the salt pork and put half of the pork in the bottom of the bean pot. Add the beans, mix the molasses and other seasonings with a little hot water, and pour over the beans. Add enough hot water to cover. Place the rest of the salt pork on top, cover the pot, and cook the beans in a slow oven (about 250 degrees F.) for 6 or 7 hours. Add a little hot water from time to time to replace that which cooks away and is absorbed by the beans. Keep the lid on the bean pot until the last hour of cooking, then uncover, and allow the beans and pork on the top to brown.

Lima Beans with Bacon

1 pound dry lima beans	3/8 quart milk
1-1/2 quarts water	3/8 tablespoon salt
3/8 pound raw bacon	

Wash and pick over the beans and soak them overnight in 1-1/2 quarts of cold water. In the morning, cook them in the same water in which they were soaked. Fry the bacon slowly until crisp and drain on absorbent paper. Break the bacon into pieces and add with the milk and salt to the beans. This mixture may be cooked in a double boiler or it may be poured into a greased casserole and baked slowly (at 300 degrees F.). Cook about 1-1/2 hours. Serve hot.

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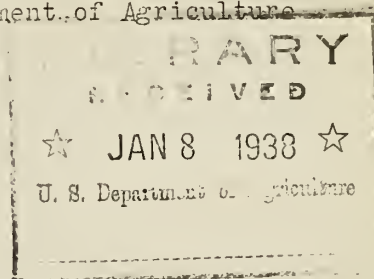
WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

MANY HOMEMAKERS NEGLECT
PROTECTIVE FOODS



"Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are", promised an eighteenth-century Frenchman. If he were alive today he would have a chance to test his theory on a large scale. For being completed now is the most comprehensive study of what families have to eat ever undertaken in this country.

From facts gleaned in this study nutritionists are doing their own kind of "telling". This is based on the scientific knowledge of how diet influences the health.

Homemakers of 25,000 representative families of the United States furnished the figures for the study. They told how much they spent for food and what they got for their money. Diet experts rated the food of each family for what it provided nutritionally.

For convenience they divided the diets into four classes--very good, good, fair, and poor. How high a diet rated depended upon how well it provided for the day-to-day needs of the family, and how wide a margin of safety it afforded beyond these average requirements.

They also noted in what ways family diets fell short, what food elements most generally ran low. The study already has advanced to the point where many significant trends are evident. And it has illustrated again the importance of the homemaker's food knowledge in determining how well she feeds her family.

Three-fifths of all the families were getting diets rated fair or poor. The other two-fifths were getting diets that rated good or very good nutritionally. All the families included in this report were white and none of them were on relief.

One out of every five families studied was getting a diet that, if continued over a long period of time, will undermine health and lower resistance to disease. Two out of five were getting diets rated fair. A fair diet provides for each day's physical needs but builds up little reserve in the body.

There are a number of factors that influence the kind of diet a family gets. Some of these are income, food selection, and home-produced food. The last is especially important among farm and village families. Some families have incomes that allow only a small amount of money for food. In many cases this money is not sufficient to purchase an adequate diet however wisely it is spent.

As the money spent for food rises, the chances for a better diet rise with it. But cost alone is not a measure of the desirability of a diet. A low-cost assortment of foods properly selected may give better returns in nutrition and health than a more expensive list chosen at random.

This is where the homemaker comes in. How well she selects her food depends upon her knowledge of what makes up a well-balanced diet. She must know food values, know which foods are economical and reliable sources of vitamins, minerals, protein, and energy.

Apparently many homemakers do not fully realize the value of protective foods--milk, butter, eggs, green and leafy vegetables, and fruits. For the study shows that the average diet is better fortified in proteins and carbohydrates than in the minerals and vitamins that these protective foods provide.

Of the minerals, calcium and iron shortages occur most frequently. In the North and West, vitamins A and B most often run low. In the South, it is vitamin G and the pellagra-preventing factors in which diets are deficient.

These shortages show up even among families spending fairly generous amounts for their food. Many of these diets could have been improved without spending any more money. It merely would have been a matter of selecting more carefully the food from each of the different food groups.

Milk is an economical source of several important food values. It contributes more to good nutrition than any one food. It has no equal as a source of calcium. Without a generous supply of milk, it is difficult to get enough calcium for building and maintaining strong bones and teeth and for promoting a high level of general health.

Milk is also a source of phosphorus, proteins of good quality, vitamins A and G, and it is excellent as a pellagra preventive. Even families who economize sharply should get plenty of milk in some form.

Vegetables and fruits belong in the protective class because of their vitamins and minerals. Of all the vegetables the leafy, green, and yellow varieties are especially necessary. The thin, green, leafy kinds furnish vitamins A and C, and iron to the diet. Other green, non-leafy vegetables are valuable though not so rich in these food elements.

Tomatoes and citrus fruits are especially valuable for vitamin C. All fruits and vegetables furnish a little of vitamin B. Eggs furnish iron and good protein.

An adequate diet at any cost must include these protective foods as well as the body-building, and energy-producing foods. Those who study the nutritive values of food know that some types of food are more economical than others as sources of certain food elements. How this knowledge may be useful to the homemaker is illustrated in the following two meals.

At one cost level a typical dinner might include a thick steak, French-fried potatoes, hothouse tomatoes, fancy rolls, avocado and pomegranate salad, a whipped cream and pastry dessert.

But for an adequate dinner at a much lower cost the main dish of the meal could be a meat and cereal loaf. The meat in the loaf would be a less expensive but no less nutritious cut. Scalloped potatoes, buttered beets with their green tops, cabbage salad, bread and butter, hot gingerbread, and milk for all would complete the dinner.

Both of these meals have practically the same food elements. Both are well-balanced nutritionally. But one is more flavorful and makes use of the more expensive vegetables and exotic fruits. Also it allows for more time and money in food preparation.

A whole day's meals must supplement each other and provide the family all the nourishment necessary for a day's activity. Following is a plan for a moderate-cost diet that may serve as a guide to the homemaker in choosing such an assortment of foods.

Milk: 1 quart daily for each child; 1 pint for each adult.
(To drink or cooked in food.)

Vegetables and fruits:

Four and one-half to five servings per person daily.

One serving daily of potatoes or sweetpotatoes.
One serving daily of tomatoes or citrus fruits.
One serving daily of leafy, green, or yellow vegetables.
Three to five servings a week of other vegetables.
One serving daily of fruit.

Eggs: 2 or 3 a week for adults; 4 or 5 for young children; a few in cooking

Meat, fish, or poultry:

About five times a week. Or daily if prepared in combination with cereals or vegetables.

A cereal dish: Daily.

Bread and Butter: At every meal.

Dessert: Once a day, sometimes twice if desired and if it does not displace the protective foods.

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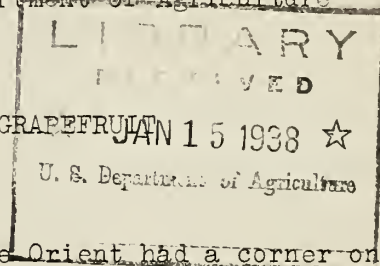
WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

GOOD SEASON FOR ORANGES -- GRAPEFRUIT



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Every schoolboy knows that centuries ago the Orient had a corner on many of the luxuries of life. While other countries of the world warred and discovered new lands, the East placidly produced fine silks, rare perfumes and spices. There it was that the citrus fruits were first cultivated.

The Orient found a ready market for its silks and spices. Even the boldest warrior and the most ambitious monarch had moments when they craved such luxuries. Men risked their lives to bring back these things by way of the perilous trade routes. Gradually, along these same trade routes, spread the cultivation of the citrus fruits.

About half a century before Columbus took his famous trip the sweet orange reached Europe. It came to our country over a century later. In St. Augustine, our oldest city, the Spanish cultivated the orange along with its other citrus cousins.

The past of the grapefruit is less glamorous -- more mysterious than that of the orange. We know little of its heritage. It came to us directly from the West Indies. Only in rather recent years have Americans really begun to appreciate its distinctive flavor.

Today, oranges and grapefruit are among the major fruits grown in the United States. They grow only in the warmer parts of our country.

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According to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics the production of citrus fruits has shown a big increase in recent years. And indications are that this increase will continue at least during the next five years. The reason for this is that many young trees are just coming into full bearing.

The citrus season of 1937/38 gives every indication of being a good one from the consumers' standpoint. Right now it looks as though the orange crop will be the largest on record and the grapefruit crop second only to the record production of last season.

The men who predict these crops, however, are never too positive about the final harvest. For a crop of oranges or grapefruit can have a lot of bad luck from the time the first fruits are picked until the last fruit is harvested months later.

The first oranges from last spring's bloom appeared on the market in late fall. These were mainly the earlier ripening navel oranges from California and early fruit from Florida. Now on the market are more California navels and mid-season varieties from Florida.

About March, Florida Valencias will be coming to market; the California navels will continue. By the end of May, both of these will be pretty well gone. In May the California Valencias start and from late June until next fall they will have the market to themselves.

From present indications it appears that there will be more oranges than usual next summer. The California Valencia crop is expected to be considerably larger than it was last year.

In general, the grapefruit season begins in September. In Florida, the chief producing state, shipments are practically completed by mid-June. Texas ranks next to Florida as a grapefruit producer and shipments from there are usually over by April. California and Arizona produce smaller quantities.

It isn't necessary for the shopper to have a wide knowledge of varieties to select a good orange. Of course it's easy to distinguish a navel orange because of its deep orange-colored/^{skin}and the indentation at one end.

Valencias have thin skins and are lighter in color. Often they are greenish when fully ripe. They are more oblong in shape than the navel.

A good orange of any variety is firm with no soft spots. It's skin is smooth, and the fruit seems heavy for its size. Avoid fruit that is puffy or bulged at the ends. Decay often appears as a soft discolored spot on the peel at the stem end of the orange. Unless you watch for this especially it is easily overlooked.

Some oranges are designated as "russet" because of a rust-colored discoloration on the surface. These oranges are edible and some persons even prefer them to others. But such fruit tends to wilt faster than is normal.

Selecting grapefruit is a similar procedure. Good ones are well-shaped, thin-skinned, not soft, wilted, or flabby. They are heavy for their size with no puffy or coarse skin. Decay often appears in the stem end just as it does in oranges. Russetting in grapefruit is a reddish-brown or reddish-yellow discoloration.

Citrus fruits are topnotchers on many counts. But most important of all is their vitamin C -- a none too common food element. Both children and adults need a supply of vitamin C every day because the body can not store it.

A lack of vitamin C will cause loss of appetite with loss of weight, and fatigue. A greater lack will result in a condition known as scurvy. To prevent such deficiency diseases nutritionists advise both children and adults to get plenty of this element each day. For very young children they make sure of this by advising orange juice or tomato juice every day.

Besides being an excellent source of vitamin C, oranges contain vitamin B, and a little A. Grapefruit are also an excellent source for C, and contain vitamin B. The flavor of both these fruits depends in some measure upon the relative amounts of citric acid and sugar they contain.

In recent years scientists have been able to study more satisfactorily the vitamin C content of foods. For now available to them is a chemical technique for assaying vitamin C that gives results much quicker than the older method of waiting for the reactions of experimental animals.

Last year, using this technique, the Bureau of Home Economics made tests of many citrus fruits. Not only did they test oranges, lemons, limes, and grapefruit. But they also experimented with some of the newer citrus hybrids being developed -- the tangelos, tangors, orangequats, and limequats.

In oranges, for example, experiments have shown that there are significant differences in the vitamin C content of oranges of different varieties. But there are also differences in samples of the same varieties. Oftentimes these sample differences are greater than known differences due to variety.

So the homemaker who goes to market needn't wonder which variety to get as far as vitamin C is concerned. For it may be that whichever she buys there will be greater differences among the single oranges in a dozen than in any two varieties she might buy.

Vitamin C is easily destroyed by heat. But there are scores of ways to use grapefruit and oranges to get the most of their vitamin C. Half a grapefruit or a glass of orange juice has become a classic breakfast first course. Both oranges and grapefruit appear in fruit cups, salads, and gelatine dishes.

There are other uses for these fruits where flavor is most important. Orange juice is used as the liquid in drop cookies or added to cake icing for flavor. Both grapefruit and oranges are excellent for marmalades.

The flavor and color of the outer rind, the pectin in the white part of the rind, and the acid in the juice -- all contribute to make the perfect marmalade. Naturally the best time of year to make a supply of marmalade from oranges and other citrus fruits is at the time when they are most abundant and have their best flavor.

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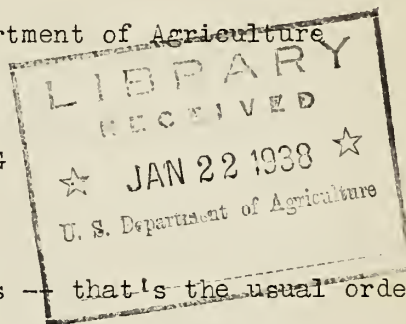
WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE MARKET BASKET

by

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Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

HOME MEAT CANNING



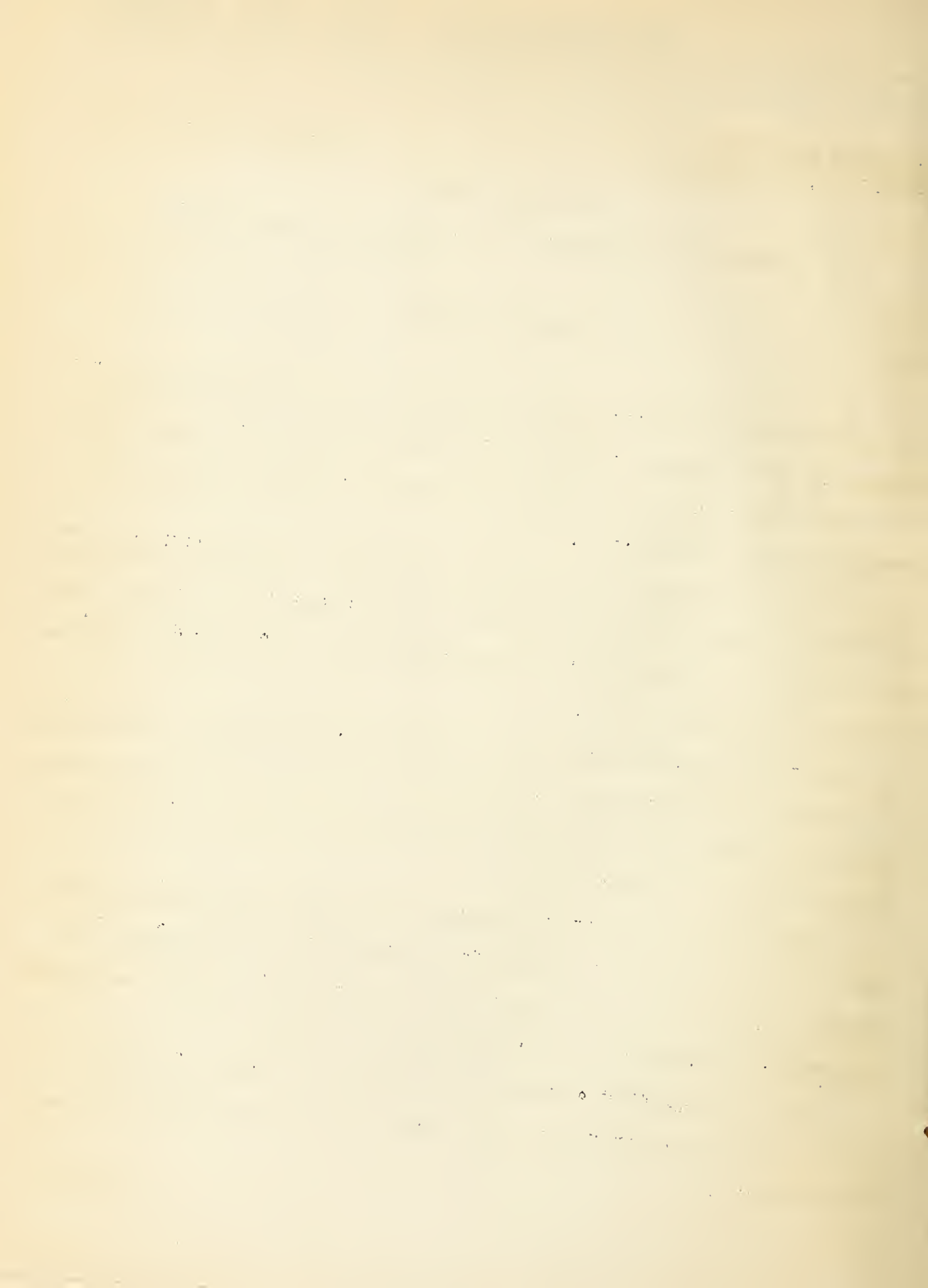
Can in the summer for the lean winter months -- that's the usual order of things. But with home meat canning it's the other way around. For slaughtering time on the farm comes in with settled cold weather. It's then that home meat canning gets under full steam.

"Steam under pressure" is the accurate description. Scientific research has proved that the only safe way to can meat is to use a steam pressure canner. With one of these it is possible to get a temperature of 240 to 250 degrees -- the heat necessary to sterilize meat.

Water baths, steam canners without pressure, or oven canners do not sterilize the meat with sufficient speed. In them the temperature never gets above boiling-- 212 degrees. That is not high enough to kill dangerous bacteria, that may be in the meat, within a reasonable time.

Those who do not have a steam pressure canner should either plan slaughtering so that they can eat the meat fresh, or preserve it in some other way than canning. But those who do have this piece of equipment may get a safe and appetizing product by following the general rules for meat canning.

One of the first of these rules is "be sanitary". Slaughtering should be carried out in a strictly sanitary way. Table tops and utensils must be cleaned thoroughly.



Give wooden surfaces special treatment. Wash them with soapy water, then rinse with boiling water. If you use them several days at a stretch give them a special disinfecting.

Pans and kettles should be of enamelware, aluminum, retinned metal, or stainless metal. Copper and iron may discolor the meat. And meat left in a galvanized container for over half an hour is likely to take up a harmful amount of zinc.

Meat may be canned just as soon as the body heat is completely gone from it. But one of the advantages of slaughtering in cold weather is that you may keep the carcass for two or three days before canning. Then the meat is easier to handle.

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If you/intend to keep the meat for several days, chill it immediately after slaughtering. Otherwise, decomposition will start within a few hours. Keep the whole carcass chilled until it is ready to can. But don't let it freeze.

Frozen meat may be canned, but it is not a high-quality product. If meat does freeze, saw it or cut it just as it is, into strips from one to one and one-half inches thick. Drop these into boiling water without letting them thaw first. Continue to boil them until they are cooked sufficiently to process.

There are two methods of canning meat. One you may use only if you have tin cans. By this method you put the meat into the cans and "exhaust" them. This exhausting is done by steaming the filled tin cans in a water bath before sealing. This removes most of the air from the tissues of the meat.

The other method is quicker -- takes less stove space. In this the meat is cooked first, then processed. To put up a lot of beef or other meat, the best way to precook it is in boiling water until the color of raw meat is practically gone.

Frying meat or browning it in fat is not a suitable method of cooking before processing. That appetizing "brown" flavor in the fresh cooked meat does not carry over to the canned product. Instead it makes the meat dry and detracts from the flavor.

Meat for precooking may be in pieces of about a pound each. But when the meat is packed hot into the cans these pieces should be cut so that there are two or three to each can. These smaller pieces process better.

After you pack the meat into the cans, cover with broth. See that every bit of the meat is covered with the broth. Any that stays high and dry will lose flavor and turn dark. Between the meat and the top of the jar there should be some "head space" to allow for the meat to expand during processing. In pint glass jars one-half inch of "head space" is enough. In tin cans this may be slightly less.

If you are using tin cans, put the salt in first, then the meat. Salt on top sometimes rusts the can lids. One-half teaspoon to a pint jar or three-fourths teaspoon to a number two can is the right amount.

Smaller containers are best for canning meats. Anything larger than a pint glass jar or a number two and one-half tin can requires too heavy processing.

Fresh beef, veal, lamb, or pork put up in this way needs processing at 15 pounds pressure. The time depends on the size of the can. For a pint glass jar or a number two can, 85 minutes is required. For the larger number 2-1/2 cans 110 minutes are necessary.

Cuts of beef commonly used for canning are round, rump, loin, rib, and chuck. In pork, only the leaner portions are canned -- the loin and meat from the spare ribs. Shoulders and hams are usually cured.

Use only the leaner portions of meat in prime condition. An excess of fat will interfere with effective sterilization of the meat. Therefore, leave only enough fat for flavor.

To use small pieces of beef and cuts that contain more connective tissue can it as hash or stew meat to be used later in combination with vegetables. Cut or chop the meat into uniformly small pieces for hash. Add sufficient water to cover,

bring to simmering and cook for several minutes. Pack hot, and process five minutes longer than for ordinary canned meat.

Clear meat stock may be canned for use in soups. Broths should be fairly concentrated, but not cooked long enough to lose flavor. Meat stock in pint jars or number two tin cans need be processed only 25 minutes. For number two and one-half cans the time is 30 minutes. Bones processed under pressure for a long time will give a gluey taste to the stock.

Meat canned by itself in some of these ways is most economical of jar space. It may be taken out and used by itself or combined with vegetables. But for variation some meat may be put up in special preparations. Beef is sometimes canned with tomatoes, onions, turnips, and potatoes.

Head cheese may be made from a hog's head, tongue, and heart according to any good recipe. Corned beef, pork and beans and chile con carne, are a number of other special products.

Using the canned meat is a story in itself. But any cook of imagination will have little trouble thinking up interesting dishes. Meat croquettes, stuffed peppers, curry of meat, hot meat sandwiches, chop suey, and tamale pie are just a few of the appetizing ways home-canned meat may be served.

